

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-05 IO-04

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-04 TRSE-00 USIA-06

NSC-05 OES-02 OMB-01 AID-05 SP-02 /063 W

----- 068840

R 010625Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9982

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13808

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SANR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES

REF: STATE 233134

1. REFERRING TO THE PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON NARCOTIC CONTROL ACTIVITIES, I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPORT ON THE COMMENDABLE JOB THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM HAS DONE IN FIGHTING ILLICIT NARCOTIC TRAFFICKING, SMUGGLING, AND ABUSE. THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, THROUGH THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE NARCOTICS BUREAU, MARITIME POLICE, CUSOTMS SERVICE, AND NAVAL FORCES, HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT SEIZURES OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS WITHIN VIETNAM AND ALONG ITS COASTAL WATERS. SOME OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT SEIZURES ARE THE CAPTURE OF TWO THAI FISHING TRAWLERS LADEN WITH A COMBINED TOTAL OF 8 1/2 TONS OF RAW OPIUM AND 281 POUNDS OF MORPHINE BASE, WHICH, UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD HAVE EVENTUALLY BEEN CLANDESTINELY CONVERTED INTO HEROIN AND MOST PROBABLY FOUND ITS WAY INTO THE UNITED STATES. THESE TRAWLERS, SEIZED ON APRIL 19, 1973, AND JUNE 26, 1974, RESPECTIVELY, WERE PROVEN NOT TO BE DESTINED FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. IF NOT FOR THE VIGILANCE OF VIETNAMESE NAVAL AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE CONSTANTLY PATROLLING THEIR TERRITORIAL WATERS FOR SUSPECT VESSELS, THIS LARGE AMOUNT OF NARCOTICS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SEIZED. SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION OF THE JUNE 26 TRAWLER LED TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE AUTHORITIES PASSED ON TO THE HONG KONG

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NARCOTICS BUREAU. THIS INFORMATION WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE

SEIZURE OF AN ADDITIONAL ONE TON OF OPIUM AND 300 POUNDS OF MORPHINE BASE IN HONG KONG.

2. NUMEROUS CASES INVOLVING LOCAL VIETNAMESE NATIONALS HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED BY THE NATIONAL POLICE AND A NUMBER OF SEIZURES OF HEROIN NO 4 AND PREPARED SMOKING OPIUM HAVE RESULTED. IN EACH CASE, THE VIETNAMESE COURTS HAVE DEALT SEVERE PRISON SENTENCES ON THE CONVICTED OFFENDERS.

3. IN A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE NARCOTICS BUREAU, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF US TRAINING, HAS DEVELOPED INTO A HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND EFFICIENT INVESTIGATIVE BRANCH. THEY HAVE SET A FINE EXAMPLE FOR OTHER NARCOTIC BUREAUS REPRESENTING SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES AND HAVE ESTABLISHED AN EXCELLENT REPUTATION AS BEING ENFORCEMENT-MINDED AND EFFICIENT. ABOVE ALL, THEIR INTEGRITY IS SUCH THAT ME DEA OFFICERS DO NOT KNOW OF A SINGLE SITUATION THAT HAS THEM COMPROMISED IN THE MATTER OF INTEGRITY.

4. I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD OF THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE NARCOTIC BUREAU, GVN CUSOTMS, AND VIETNAMESE NAVAL OFFICIALS WITH THE SAIGON OFFICE OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION. ALL OF THESE AGENCIES COMBINE THEIR MANPOWER, INDIVIDUAL TALENTS, INTELLIGENCE, AND INFORMATION TO STEM THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS THROUGHOUT VIETNAM.

5. VIETNAMESE HIGH LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE VOICED STRONG OPINIONS AGAINST DRUG ABUSE AND HAVE HAD TWO PUBLIC BURNINGS OF HEROIN. THE FIRST TOOK PLACE ON JULY 4, 1973, IN WHICH 100 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN WERE PUBLICLY DESTROYED. THE SECOND CEREMONY TOOK PLACE ON SEP 5, 1974, AT WHICH TIME APPROXIMATELY 40 KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN WERE PUBLICLY DESTROYED. FOLLOWING EACH CEREMONY, A TWO-WEEK ANTI-NARCOTIC EXHIBITION WAS STAGED FOR PUBLIC VIEWING AND ALSO A COUNTRYWIDE ANTI-NARCOTIC CAMPAIGN WAS CONDUCTED. IN ADDITION, THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT HAS ACTIVELY PRESENTED EDUCATIONAL ANTI-DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS BOTH ON TELEVISION AND IN SCHOOLS COUNTRYWIDE.

6. IN THE WAY OF REHABILITATION, A GOVERNMENT RUN REHABILITATION CENTER IS CURRENTLY IN OPERATION AT LONG BINH, VIETNAM, AND TO CONFIDENTIAL

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DATE, OVER 350 PATIENTS HAVE UNDERGONE PROLONGED TREATMENT. ANOTHER REHABILITATION CENTER FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL IS EXPECTED TO OPEN SOON ON PHU QUOC ISLAND. IN GENERAL, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IS DOING ITS BEST TO REBUILD THE LIVES OF VIETNAMESE DRUG ABUSERS.

7. AS FOR TRAINING, THE VIETNAMESE HAVE ALWAYS WELCOMED FORMAL PROFESSIONAL NARCOTICS TRAINING FOR ITS OFFICERS AND CURRENTLY ARE HOSTING BOTH THE DEA INTERNATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOLS AND US CUSTOMS

NARCOTICS TRAINING SCHOOLS.

8. IN SUMMARY, THE US MISSION FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT EVEN THOUGH VIETNAM IS NOT A CONDUIT FOR ILLEGAL NARCOTICS INTO THE UNITED STATES, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARE ACTIVELY DOING THEIR PART WITH EVERY MEANS POSSIBLE TO ASSIST THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST THE INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS.

9. AS FOR SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PROGRAM,, I BELIEVE THE MISSION AND ITS BACK UP AGENCIES IN WASHINGTON ARE DOING EVERYTHING NECESSARY. I AM ALSO CONVINCED THAT CONSIDERING THEIR LIMITED RESOURCES THE GVN IS DOING LIKEWISE. WE WILL BE ALERT FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAM. RECOGNIZING THE MAJOR ROLE OF THE GVN NATIONAL POLICE IN THE NARCOTICS AREA, I REGRET EXISTENCE OF THE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT THAT HAS MADE MANDATORY THE CESSATION OF US SUPPORT TO ALL POLICE FORCES EXCEPT THE VERY MINIMAL ASSISTANCE WE PROVIDE THOSE WHO ARE DIRECTLY AND ON A FULL TIME BASIS CONCERNED WITH NARCOTICS. OF COURSE, WE ARE AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE IN FULL AND COMPLETE COMPLIANCE WITH THE LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS. HOWEVER, NARCOTICS PROBLEMS AS ALL OTHER ELEMENTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE A FUNCTION OF ALL POLICE AND THE MEAGER SUPPORT WE GIVE THE NARCOTICS BUREAU, DOES NOT IN ANY WAY MAKE UP FOR THE LESSENING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OVERALL FORCE, PARTICULARLY IN AREAS SUCH AS COMMUNICATIONS, SPARE PARTS, TRANSPORTATION, COMPUTER OPERATION, ETC. AMONG THE US INTERESTS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THIS DIMINISHED EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE IS THAT OF NARCOTICS CONTROL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG ABUSE, DRUG CONTROL, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SAIGON13808
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740313-0105
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741179/aaaacoxz.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 233134
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Aug-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES
TAGS: SNAR, US, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005